



IRVINGTON

Village News

<http://www.irvingtonny.gov>
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Winter 2005

Dear Neighbors:

Westwood Open Space Update

In 2000, the voters of this Village overwhelmingly approved a \$3 million bond referendum for the preservation of open space throughout the Village. It is now four years later and we must make an important decision about the final allocation of these funds.

After the open space bond was approved, our Open Space Advisory Committee, a group of dedicated Villagers charged by the Village Board with prioritizing open space acquisitions, quickly identified the Westwood property (located off Mountain Road in the northeastern portion of Irvington) as the top priority for preservation. The owners of the Westwood property, which consists of approximately 26 acres, had already obtained preliminary subdivision approval to build 22 single-family homes on the property. By the end of 2001, members of the Village Board successfully negotiated an option agreement to purchase the property. The purchase price was \$6.85 million and the Village Board publicly committed \$750,000 toward the acquisition.

The option agreement required the Village to exercise the option to acquire the property by May 2003. At that point, after months of negotiations, The Village Board had obtained a \$3 million commitment from Westchester County and a \$330,000 grant from New York State toward the acquisition. The Village Board publicly increased the Village's commitment to \$1 million, leaving a shortfall of approximately \$2.5 million. Despite the shortfall, the Village Board felt that the acquisition of the property was so crucial that it voted to exercise the option in May 2003. However, as a potential means of addressing the shortfall, the Village Board set aside up to 7 acres of the Westwood property for subdivision into 4 single family building lots that could be sold. This potential method of closing the funding gap enabled the Village Board to make the bold decision for the benefit of the Village to exercise the option.

Between May and December 2003 the Village raised an additional \$1.1 million toward the acquisition from donations by its residents, an award from a private foundation, and by partnering with Scenic Hudson Land Trust and the Open Space Institute. During negotiations with these organizations, the Village agreed to sell no more than 2 of the single family building lots and the Village Board publicly increased the Village's commitment to \$1.5 million. On December 19, 2003, the Village closed on the acquisition of the 26-acre Westwood property.

Including all acquisition costs, the funding shortfall (i.e. the difference between the Village Board's stated commitment and its actual borrowings) now stands at just under \$1.1 million. The Open Space Advisory Committee,



Mayor Dennis Flood presents a proclamation to Irvington's Joshua Rattner (see page 2)

after carefully considering alternative open space acquisitions, has strongly recommended the Village Board close the gap by raising the Village's commitment to \$2.6 million from \$1.5 million. The Village Board supports this recommendation, but we also recognize that devoting these funds to the Westwood acquisition will greatly reduce the number of other parcels that can be considered for acquisition. Therefore, the Board believes it is important to give Village taxpayers the opportunity to express their opinion on this issue. In order to provide sufficient time to accomplish this goal, the Village Board has agreed to suspend the subdivision process on the single family building lots. The Village Board also believes that we should make additional efforts to seek outside funding from private foundations. Toward that end, we are asking all residents that have corporate or other private foundation contacts for assistance. **If you are aware of such organizations with an interest in preserving open space, especially those with a presence in our area, please contact Village Administrator Don Marra at (914) 591-4356 or DMARRA@IRVINGTONNY.GOV.**

As is evidenced by the long and difficult acquisition process, the Village Board is strongly committed to preserving open space. We have made aggressive yet calculated decisions along the way in an effort to preserve Westwood. It is our responsibility to the taxpayers of this Village to ensure that increasing our commitment of bond funds to the Westwood acquisition is a decision supported by the Village and to exhaust all reasonable efforts to seek additional funding before we do so. I look forward to hearing from you.

Dennis P. Flood, Mayor



In The Spotlight

As stated in our last newsletter, this column will be a regular feature that will appear in upcoming issues to keep residents knowledgeable of existing boards and committees and volunteering opportunities in the Village. If you are interested in serving on a Village board or committee, please contact Mayor Flood through Village Administrator Donald Marra. He can be reached via telephone (591-7070) or via email (dmarra@irvingtonny.gov).

What is the Tree Preservation Commission?

The Tree Preservation Commission (TPC) consists of five members appointed by the Board for two-year terms, and they must be Village residents who have general knowledge of trees and shrubs and their planting and maintenance.

The TPC meets quarterly or as often as necessary to conduct pertinent business and acts promptly on applications. All determinations and decisions made by the TPC are by a majority vote. In the event that fewer than five members of the TPC are available within a reasonable time to act upon any application, three members of the TPC shall constitute a quorum, and if no majority vote is obtained, the Village Clerk, or designee, votes on the said application. **There are presently two vacancies on the Tree Preservation Committee.**



IRVINGTON TOWN HALL THEATER

Budding junior thespians please take note of Irvington Children's Theater auditions on March 8th for MTI Broadway Junior musical production of **Annie** that will be held on May 13, 14 and 15th. Rehearsals are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and everyday the last week. We have lots of other shows coming up performed by children: Cagle & Company Jr. Teens in **Dames at Sea**, on January 28-30, Sr. Teens in **Brigadoon**, on February 11-13, and Broadway Training Center's kids are presenting **Little Shop of Horrors**, on March 18-20. Your child will adore the plant, Audrey, who morphs into the R & B singing carnivore and alien creature poised for global domination!

Our new seats are getting rave posterior reviews and everyone loves the new improved sight lines. If you haven't checked it all out, now might be the time to do so. For the folk music lovers, sales are brisk for **Slaid Cleaves & Eliza Gilkyson**, on March 5th and **Janis Ian**, on April 16th presented by Mainstage coffehouse. These concerts will be very special evenings with some of the best performers in our intimate theater. Come to a special fundraiser for the Theater, **Irvington Jam Session**, on March 12th, featuring Jenny and Jessie Lambiasi, *Mountain Madness* with David Perez and Howie Kaplan and *Group Therapy* with Mike Moskowitz, Ray Ovetsky and Mark Mazur and special surprise guests.

Gardeners and ornithologists take note of the 75th anniversary of **The Irvington Garden Club celebration with Dr. Stephen Kress**, author and bird extraordinaire in his lecture "Creating Bird Habitats in Our Gardens" with a post dessert reception.

For further show details visit www.IrvingtonTheater.com, or pick up one of our brochures. **For reservations call the box office 591-6602.**



Proclamation Presented to Joshua Rattner

Mayor Dennis P. Flood presented a proclamation to Irvington resident Joshua Rattner at the December 20th regular Board of Trustees meeting.

Mr. Rattner exhibited incredible bravery and compassion when he observed an accident involving a burning car and truck on Route 9A in Briarcliff on the evening of November 7th. He pulled the driver out of the burning truck and rolled him on the ground to put out the flames on the driver's back.

Mayor Flood said, "Joshua Rattner acted unselfishly with great courage and is truly a hero of our times."

2004 GRANTS

Once again the Village of Irvington has been very successful in its grant writing effort. Over **three-quarters of a million dollars** in funding were received for nine specific projects in 2004. For a relatively small municipality, Irvington did extremely well. Please note: Dollar amounts have been rounded.

Senior Citizen Full-Size Van	60,000
Senior Citizen Medium-Size Van	29,000
Village Hall Roof and Clock Tower Repair	197,000
Recycling Truck	88,000
Railroad Way & Station Plaza Improvements	250,000
Fire Department Communications Upgrade	38,000
Police Technology Upgrade	29,000
Records Management	10,000
Main Street Water Main Pipe Replacements	90,000
Total:	\$791,000

**Village Hall
Clerk's Office Hours
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Police Department

NEW OFFICERS:

The Police Department recently welcomed the addition of two new officers to the force. They started in their positions on November 29th. Both new members have prior police experience with the City of Mount Vernon Police Department.

Ronald Cardillo is 28 years old, a resident of Rockland County, and has been a police officer for three and a half years.

Jean-Marc Grolier is also 28 years old, a resident of Mt. Vernon, and has served as a police officer for almost two years.

CHILD SAFETY:

Parents throughout Westchester County have become concerned and alarmed by several recent reports of possible attempted child abductions and apparent inappropriate contact. Incidents have occurred in several communities including Rye, Eastchester, Pelham, and New Rochelle. School-aged children have been approached by a vehicle (in most reports, described as a green minivan or SUV occupied by a man and a woman), and have been enticed by offers of candy or a ride. Without instilling fear or hysteria, all parents are urged to talk to their children and to reinforce some BASIC SAFETY RULES regarding strangers.

1. Children should never accept a ride from someone, unless you have told them it is okay. If approached by a stranger making an offer of candy or a ride, they should say NO.
2. If a person is talking to them from a car, they should not need to go near the car.
3. If they walk to and from school, they should walk with a friend or in a group. It's safer and more fun for them to be with their friends. Do not let them take isolated routes.
4. Teach your children to never leave their school grounds with someone they don't know. Tell them not to be fooled by a stranger saying there is an emergency.
5. Adults do not generally ask children for help. Don't be enticed by an unknown person who asks for help looking for a lost pet or directions.
6. Finally, when they feel threatened, children need to get the attention of others. If they are scared, tell them to go to a safe location for help - a store or a business - not a wooded secluded area. If necessary, they should yell or scream to alert passing people.

If any parent is informed of any suspicious activity or persons, immediately report this information to the Police Department.

SNOW REMOVAL ORDINANCE:

At the Village Board meeting of December 6th, the Village Code section that dealt with the removal of vehicles due to a snow emergency was amended. The new law addresses the Main Street corridor, its adjacent side streets, and municipal parking areas.

In recent years, heavy snowfall has presented the Irvington DPW with a challenging clean up. During a storm, their first priority is to clear the lanes of traffic. Owners of parked vehicles are not expected or advised to move their cars.



*Irvington's New Police Officers
Ron Cardillo on left, and Jean-Marc Grolier on right*

Following a storm, the DPW will then focus its attention on the clearing of the parking lanes and the removal of the snow. This is when they encounter obstacles. Some vehicles will sit snow covered and will not be moved for days.

Following a snow storm of two or more inches, NO PARKING-SNOW REMOVAL notices may be posted twenty-four hours in advance to indicate the areas and roadways that have been designated by the DPW for the clearing away of snow. Vehicles not moved will be subject to tow at the expense of the owner.

Rest assured that the Police Department and the DPW will use towing as a last resort. In most cases, areas designated for clean up will be determined consistent with the present Alternate Side of the Street parking regulations.

The efficient removal of snow should provide everybody with a better opportunity to find a parking space.

DPW

One of the most important responsibilities and challenging tasks facing the Department of Public Works during the winter Season is keeping the Village roadways and sidewalks safe and accessible during and after a winter storm. This is accomplished in two phases. Phase one is the plowing and salting of all Village roads and sidewalks. Phase two is snow removal. We realize it is frustrating to be "plowed in" by a Village snowplow after clearing your driveway or walkway. Unfortunately this cannot be helped. It is the DPW's responsibility to clear all Village roadways and keep them accessible especially for our Emergency Services, Police, Fire and Ambulance. When clearing your driveway or walkway after you have been "plowed in" pile the snow on your own property. Do not throw it back into the road, as it reacts with the salt, melts, then freezes up and creates a dangerous icing condition. As for snow removal, please be patient. DPW must first remove snow from Broadway, Main Street, and all major roads. We then concentrate on the side streets and outlying areas. Your cooperation during storms will be appreciated.

The 2005 Sanitation and Recycling Schedules were mailed to all residents and businesses in the Village. There have been some major changes in our expanding Recycling Program. Please review the entire schedule and pay special attention to the "Rules and Regulations". If you did not receive a 2005 Schedule, or have any questions, you may contact The DPW by phone at 591-6044 or by e-mail at gnilsson@IrvingtonNY.gov.

Parks & Recreation Department

Spring Summer Brochure

The 2005 Spring/Summer Brochure will be in residents' homes in early March. This brochure covers a wide range of programs and activities for the entire family. Make sure you are on the look-out for it and sign up early for programs.

Youth Baseball & Softball

Registration for the 2005 Youth Baseball & Softball Season begins on Saturday, February 5th from 12:30pm to 3:00pm at the I.K. Benjamin Community Center. Leagues and teams for children Kindergarten through 15 years of age are available. Volunteer coaches are needed. If you are interested in being a coach, please contact Angela Linsalato at the Rec Dept.

Businesses and residents who are interested in being a team sponsor for the 2005 season are also needed. It costs \$350.00 to be a team sponsor. For more information on sponsorship, please contact Joe Archino.

Adult Softball Leagues

The village offers several different options for Adult Softball Teams. Organizational meetings for leagues are held in early March.

Annual Egg Hunt

The annual "Egg Hunt" for children is scheduled for Saturday March 19th. Detailed information will be announced in February.

For additional information on any of the programs please call the Recreation Center at: 591-7736.

Notification of Polling Location Change District 8

The polling location for the 8th Election District has been changed to the Irvington Public Library at 12 South Astor Street. The previous location was the I. K. Benjamin Recreation Center at 71 Main Street. This change in polling location is effective starting with the Village election in March 2005 and is applicable to all future National, State, and Local elections. School District elections are not affected by this change.

If you are uncertain which Election District you live in, please call the Irvington Clerk-Treasurer's office at (914) 591-7070 or the Westchester County Board of Elections at (914) 995-5700.

IrvingtonVillage News

Our thanks to all those who have contributed to this publication
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